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Fighting prejudice in elementary schools

Imagine a school classroom where children are divided into groups according to the colour of their eyes or hair. They are told that those with blue eyes may not speak to children from the other groups, may not play with them or assist anyone except from their own group.

In another classroom, a child is asked to describe his feelings about a good friend...why they are friends, what the person is like, positive characteristics and so forth. Then the child is asked to look at his friend through a large magnifying glass covered with coloured cellophane and describe how the friend has changed. The obvious answer is that the friend has changed colour. But does this change the child's feelings about the friend or what his friend is really like?

These are just two of the exercises for fighting prejudice in a new manual for use in elementary schools, being distributed by the Anti-Defamation League.

Entitled *Teacher, they called me a...* the book gives teachers more than 60 classroom activities and down-to-earth approaches for counteracting prejudice and discrimination among children.

The work, originally prepared for the Utah State Office of Education and published as a book by ADL, was written by Dr. Deborah A. Byrnes of the Department of Elementary Education of Utah State University. Dr. Byrnes interviewed both teachers and students to determine the issues to be addressed.

The book's introduction notes that, although adults in American society like to believe children are immune to prejudice, the seeds for prejudice are shown at an early age, prior even to children starting school.

The handbook emphasizes the important role teachers can play in reducing the formation and growth of prejudicial attitudes by challenging many of the stereotypes to which children are exposed.

The aims of the book are to help children:

- understand such concepts as prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping;
- examine their own and other people's treatment of people who are different;
- be better able to analyse and reflect



Meech Lake Accord must be amended, says OHRC

Representing the views of the Ontario Human Rights Commission to the Select Committee on Constitutional Reform concerning the Meech Lake Accord, Chief Commissioner Raj Anand expressed grave concerns over the process by which the Accord was derived and the effect of the Accord on rights contained in the *Charter*.

'By drafting constitutional amendments in the absence of full discussion by Canadians ... it denies what ought to be unquestionable, namely, the importance of genuine consultation before fundamental changes are made to the supreme law of Canada,' he stated.

With respect to the *Charter*, Anand stressed that the commission's concern regarding the potential harm to *Charter* equality rights applies to all of the groups that are protected against

discrimination under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

'The Ontario Human Rights Commission,' he stated, 'fully supports the promotion and enhancement of bilingualism and is sensitive to the need for other Canadians to accommodate the legitimate concerns of Quebec within our constitutional framework.' Nevertheless, expressing the commission's belief that a secure *Charter* of Rights and Freedoms is the basis on which any negotiation of constitutional amendment should take place, Anand recommended that a provision be inserted in the Accord to make it clear that the provisions of the *Charter* will in no way be affected. 'An amendment of this kind,' he concluded, 'should be unlikely to upset the delicate political balance that is embodied in the Meech Lake Accord.'

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Hail and farewell

Raj Anand, Chief Commissioner, is delighted to announce the appointment of three new members of the commission for a three year term.

Dr. George Bancroft is currently professor emeritus of the Department of History, Philosophy and Sociology of Education at the University of Toronto. Author of numerous articles on educational and social issues and intergroup relations, Professor Bancroft serves on the board of directors of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews (Ontario Region).

John Cochrane of Sudbury is an executive board member of Local 6500, United Steelworkers of America and Vice-President of the Sudbury and District Labour Council. He acts as an intermediary between the WCB and the local union's Safety and Health Committee, and is also a member of the Youth Employment Services Committee.

Shirley O'Connor, a resident of Sioux Lookout, is president of the Ontario Native Women's Association. A former Executive Director of the Nishnawbe Gamik Friendship Centre, and member of the Town Council Economic Development Committee, Ms. O'Connor also served as delegate to the Canadian Constitutional Conference representing Metis women, and co-chaired the Provincial Metis Constitutional Committee.

The commission also expresses its gratitude to Commissioners Gene Rheame and John Bennett, whose respective terms of six and three years, expired in February. Their commitment to, and activities on behalf of, human rights are much appreciated, and we wish them well in their future endeavours.

Fighting prejudice in elementary schools

continued from page 1

on their own feelings, thereby differentiating between reasonable dislikes or caution and prejudice;
-gain an awareness and enjoyment of diversity in our society;
-act in ways that are nondiscriminatory.

Some activities are appropriate for kindergarten and primary grade children while others are for more cognitively sophisticated elementary school children.

In preparing the book, 101 elementary school children were selected to be interviewed, half from a rural area and the others from a suburban Salt Lake City community. Third and fifth graders were asked individually to respond to questions about what it means to be an American, about their views of different ethnic, racial and religious groups, how they learned about each specific group and whether they knew anyone who belonged to such minority groups. They were also questioned about reasons why children tease each other and why some children are excluded from group play.

First graders were shown 10 pictures of boys and girls from five different racial or ethnic groups - Black American, Mexican American, Native American, Asian American and Anglo American. They were asked with which child they would most like to play, using an elimination process so that all but one was selected. They were also questioned about the teasing of different ethnic and racial groups and about their knowledge of religious groups and about what in general children tease each other.

Eighty-five per cent of the first graders interviewed said children are teased about the way they look - the most frequent examples related to weight, clothes, hair and skin colour. Seventy-one per cent said children are teased about what church they attend - such

as calling a particular church 'dumb' or 'bad' or claiming to be better than someone who attends a different church.

Seventy-six per cent of third and fifth graders said children are teased about the colour of their skin; 31 per cent said children are teased about their religion.

Although the teachers interviewed were usually aware of problems, many did not know how to initiate discussion about them. All were interested in activities that would help children understand the differences among them and show more tolerance for others. The majority also agreed they would like to spend more time on citizenship issues.

The manual deals with such topics as learning about prejudice, discrimination against the disabled, race and ethnicity, religion, differences in life-style and the influence of gender on how children are treated.

In the section on learning about prejudice, tests are suggested to help youngsters make value judgments regarding things they know little about. They are made aware of the difference between disliking someone and being prejudiced against them. For example, it is natural to dislike someone who is mean to you. On the other hand, a prejudiced person may decide that everyone who looks like the mean person must also be mean. The manual also points out that some kinds of prejudice - such as being skeptical of strangers who offer presents or favours - may be acceptable.

To effectively fight racial and ethnic prejudice, the book explains the reasons for differences in the colour of hair, skin and eyes.

In the 'discrimination simulation', where a class is divided into groups based on such characteristics as eye and hair colour, the children are asked at the end of the day to describe their feelings about being separated by differences.

Uniform policy found discriminatory

In a recent board of inquiry decision, Chairman Peter Cumming of the Osgoode Hall Law School ruled that a private school in Toronto discriminated against a child of the Sikh religion when it denied him admission.

Dashminder Sehdev, six years old at the time, filed a complaint, through his litigation guardian, with the Ontario Human Rights Commission alleging discrimination in services on the basis of creed by Bayview Glen Junior Schools Ltd. The child's religion requires him to wear a turban, which the school claimed was inconsistent with its strict uniform policy.

The board ruled that this uniform policy is an act of indirect or unintentional discrimination in that its effect

excluded Sikhs, in particular those Sikhs who have long hair and turbans, from admission to the school. The school was also specifically directed to allow 'Sikh students, and students of other religions who attend the school, to maintain their dress and appearance in accordance with their religious practice'.

'Professor Cumming's decision represents a strong and significant statement of the need to be conscious of unintentional barriers to the inclusion of ethnic and religious groups in our society', stated Chief Commissioner Raj Anand.

Sex discrimination costs

A board of inquiry, appointed under the Human Rights Code, recently awarded a Bowmanville woman over \$30,000 as a result of discrimination on the basis of sex by her employer.

The board chairman, Gordon Simmons, awarded Ms. McAra \$2,500 in general damages for 'suffering mental anguish throughout the ordeal' and because the individual respondent, Jeff Constance, 'infringed her rights in a wilful and reckless manner.'

Elaine McAra filed a complaint with the Ontario Human Rights Commission, alleging that Motor Coach Industries rejected her application for employment three times because she was a woman.

In addition to awarding specific damages for lost wages in the amount of \$28,635 plus interest, the board ordered that both Mr. Constance and one other senior official of the com-

pany each write a letter of intention to the Human Rights Commission, stating that they undertake to comply with the terms of the Human Rights Code in the future, and that the provisions of the Human Rights Code be posted in prominent places in the branch office and warehouse in question.

'The fact that the board found the individual respondent and the company liable for infringing the complainant's rights and paying the award sends a clear message to all employers that they will be held responsible for discriminatory practices in their workplace and that they must take action to address the problem and correct the offending behaviour once they are made aware of it,' commented Chief Commissioner Raj Anand.

In another simulation session, pupils are divided into two groups 'A and B' with different arm bands or collars. Group A is treated as a privileged group, as if they are better students, workers and friends. Group B is criticized wherever possible. The next day the roles are reversed.

'How did it feel to have special privileges?' the children are asked. 'How did it feel to have your rights taken away?'

The manual also contains a bibliography of children's books on cultural, ethnic and racial differences providing teaching material on handling special needs.

The manual advises teachers: 'If we cherish democracy, we have a responsibility to communicate this to our children by working against the early formation of attitudes that are in direct conflict with democratic principles ... younger children are relatively more

open to new experiences and change. Change is not easy, but through our efforts we can teach children to work toward a society in which there is justice for all'.

Copies of *Teacher, they called me...* are available at \$12.50 U.S. each from the Publications Department, Anti-Defamation League, 823 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017.

This article is reprinted from the December 1987 issue of the ADL Bulletin, national publication of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

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Editorial

In line with our mandate, the Ontario Human Rights Commission submitted its views to the Senate and to two standing committees of the Legislature which were conducting public hearings to consider important legislation concerning the people of our province.

The views reflected in our submissions will provide direction on issues of public policy and serve as an invaluable source of guidance to potential complainants and respondents alike. The special knowledge and expertise in the area of human rights that the Commission possesses may also be useful in providing legislators with a particular insight. Moreover, community groups do not know whether the Commission is to act as a neutral body or is to perform the role of advocate in protecting human rights in our province. Thus there is a very critical need to enunciate our philosophy whenever public policy is debated.

In our submission to the Senate, we expressed our concerns regarding the refugee determination process contained in Bill C-55. We stressed that we deem it extremely important for Canada to continue the same degree of fairness and humanitarianism we displayed in the care of refugees in the past. Our treatment and concern for refugees, our willingness to keep an 'open door' policy for victims of oppression, were recognized all over

the world and were acknowledged by the Nansen award Canada received in 1986. In another submission, we expressed our full support for the Ontario government's decision to end discrimination in automobile insurance premiums. We applauded the proposed removal of auto insurance from the list of exemptions contained in the Human Rights Code, while at the same time promising to keep other types of insurance fairly and properly applied without discriminatory bases as prohibited by law.

Representing the views of the Commission before the Legislature's Select Committee on Constitutional Reform (Meech Lake), Chief Commissioner Raj Anand stated our apprehension relating to the potential harm to equality rights in the *Charter* protecting groups against discrimination. The Commission recommended that a provision be inserted in the Meech Lake Accord to make it clear that the *Charter* will in no way be affected.

This participation in public debates is but another step in conducting outreach programs and broadens the scope of the commission's activities. It will undoubtedly assist us in our efforts to educate the public and decision makers in providing a better climate for human rights in our province.

Reasonable accommodation well implemented

by Merv Witter

A major problem facing workers with a disability is the issue of reasonable accommodation on the part of the employer. The following case will illustrate how accommodation can be achieved through the commission's conciliation process.

A woman with a long unblemished work history who had been promoted to a supervisory position began to experience stress-related problems which she felt adversely affected her work performance. She sought medical help and offered to resign from her position after discussing the matter with her supervisor. As she was considered a valuable employee, her resignation was not accepted. She was offered the option of transferring to a less stressful area. As her illness progressed, she was unable to accept this offer and, on the advice of her doctor, took a leave of absence from work and went on long term disability.

Upon her recovery, she informed her supervisor of her expected date of return and asked about the offer to transfer her to a less stressful area. Her request was not granted; instead, she was told there was no work available and her salary and benefits were discontinued.

Following several months of unsuccessfully attempting to resolve the problem, she filed a complaint with the commission on the ground of handicap.

The evidence showed that she was a valuable employee with no serious work performance problems. In response to the complaint, the employer indicated that he had attempted to accommodate the complainant but as she did not respond positively at the time, he decided to dismiss her. However, the company expressed a willingness to discuss the complaint further with a view to an amicable resolution.

Equal access to loans by Sole-Support Parents

by Maggie Nebout

The Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues released a statement indicating that a new policy had made sole-support parents ineligible for student loans.

Some time ago, the Minister of Colleges and Universities announced a number of changes to the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) including a budgetary increase. Part of that package involved the introduction of an all-grants assistance program for sole-support parents. This policy change resulted from a thorough review of OSAP, which revealed that debtload was the major issue confronting most students. The ministry intended to increase grants for many students and decrease their loans. The amount allocated to assist sole-support parents was intended to meet educational expenses, including day care when subsidized day care was not available.

The council also alleged that since the ministry's policy included only sole-support parents, it would have a disparate effect on women as the vast majority of sole-support parents are women. The council further charged that the ministry's new policy contravened at least two sections of the Ontario Human Rights Code. As a result, the council urged the Ontario Human Rights Commission to initiate a complaint against the ministry in question because of the impact on thousands of Ontario parents.

It was not necessary for the commission to initiate a complaint against the ministry alleging systemic discrimination because a sole-support parent filed her own complaint, alleging that the ministry was discriminating against sole-support parents as a group.

The parties entered into conciliation and agreed to the following settlement:

- The employer offered to rehire the complainant in another capacity in one of its other offices at a competitive salary, with her seniority dating back to her original starting date, 1976;
- The employer offered to pay the complainant \$250.00 per month as travel allowance from her residence to her new office location in another city;
- The employer also offered to pay the complainant a bonus of one per cent of all new contracts at her new work location at the first-year value of each contract. This bonus will be paid to the complainant twice a year;
- The employer posted the commission's Declaration of Management Policy in a conspicuous place in its premises;
- The employer provided the commission with a letter of assurance of its policy of non-discrimination.

Merv Witter is Manager of the Hamilton/Niagara Region.

The Minister of Colleges and Universities later announced further changes to OSAP for sole-support parents because it had become evident that other relevant costs were not being covered by the increased grants. As a result, these other related costs could act as a barrier to keep sole-support parents from gaining access to post-secondary education. Therefore, the minister announced that all sole-support parents would be fully eligible for loan assistance up to the maximum amount, in accordance with the loan eligibility criteria for 1986-1987 and with the allowances adjusted to reflect current costs. Also, the minister noted that sole-support parents enjoy benefits under OSAP that no other group of students enjoys. For example, sole-support parents who study part-time are not expected to work, whereas all other students are expected to work.

As a result of these changes to OSAP, the complainant obtained the necessary grant and loan to enable her to pursue her goal of post-secondary studies, leading to self-sufficiency and a successful career. She expressed her thanks to the commission for its role in pursuing her complaint and for helping her to realize her dream. Accordingly, both the complainant and the commission were happy with the changes to OSAP, enabling all students to obtain equal treatment in obtaining loans to pursue their post-secondary studies.

Ms. Nebout was a human rights officer with the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Mailbag

Dear Mr. Lenkinski:

I would like to thank you for a very informative publication. I, as an individual, appreciate the information it contains, but as a Controller in my organization, I must ensure that we comply by OHRC rules.

Of the many publications that cross my desk each day, I always read *Affirmation*. Please continue to publish it and I definitely am interested in receiving it.

You may be interested to know that we, a charitable organization with less than 49 employees, have implemented the pay equity system as of November 1st, 1987, well before the implementation time table.

Sincerely,

Krys Uznanski (Mrs.)
Controller

OHRC to monitor repeat offender

In a recent board of inquiry decision dealing with sexual harassment, the Ontario Human Rights Commission was granted the right to monitor the employment practices of a respondent for a period of two years.

Graeme McKechnie, sitting as a board of inquiry, made the ruling after hearing evidence that Mr. Wilson Nuttall had been found in breach of the Code in 1984 for sexually harassing a number of female employees.

Ms. Kathleen Morano of Elliott Lake filed a complaint of discrimination in employment on the basis of sex, alleging that she suffered sexual harassment by Mr. Nuttall throughout her employment with him, ultimately causing her to leave her position.

As a result of the current hearing, during which evidence covering a two-year period was heard, the board found that the behaviour of Mr. Nuttall, the Company Garden Centre and the Company Farm Limited



On a recent trip to the commission's Timmins office Chief Commissioner Raj Anand (right) appeared on a local television program hosted by Mike Doody.

caused Ms. Morano to quit her job, 'and that her cessation was a result of the discriminatory terms and conditions of her employment and that the harassment was both verbal and physical.'

In his decision, Mr. McKechnie determined that Mr. Nuttall and the corporate respondents pay the complainant \$1,139.37 in lost wages and interest and \$2,500 for injured and hurt feelings. Mr. Nuttall was also ordered to cease and desist the sexual harassment of female employees and to post copies of the Declaration of Management Policy of the Ontario Human Rights Commission in any operation or business that he has in Ontario.

In accordance with the commission's request, the board, in addition to allowing the commission to monitor the respondent's employment practices, also ordered that each time a female employee leaves his employment in the two years following the decision, Mr. Nuttall must deliver in writing to the commission the name and address of the employee, the period of her employment and her employment record, including the reasons for termination.

'The formal authorization to monitor employment practices will hopefully set a precedent in this crucial area in allowing the commission to further intensify its preventive efforts with respect to new allegations of sexual harassment as well as repetition of these incidents,' stated Raj Anand, chief commissioner.

Protection of refugees a human rights issue

The Ontario Human Rights Commission has sent a brief to the Senate expressing its concerns with Bill C-55, which proposes to amend the refugee determination process.

'Clearly, the protection of refugees is a human rights issue,' said Raj Anand, Chief Commissioner, in the submission. 'Our response to newcomers, particularly those who are especially vulnerable, is seen, quite rightly, as a measure of our fairness and humanitarianism within the world community.'

In the brief, the commission recognizes that the refugee determination process must be revised to solve the problem of abusive claims by screening them out at an early stage. 'Of concern to us, however, are several proposed measures that would mandate the summary rejection of a refugee claimant without any consideration as to whether the person is a genuine refugee, and would require that person's removal to a safe third country without any assurance that the country will protect him or her from persecution,' said Mr. Anand.

The submission notes that the Bill has been amended in important respects since its review by the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs. However, the Bill still allows for potential danger to a refugee claimant, the commission's brief states. 'A prospective refugee could be deported from Canada, suffer persecution in his or her country of origin and manage to return to Canada only to be refused because his or her claim was previously denied.'

The brief also sets out a number of aspects of the refugee determination process that pose threats to the individual's right of procedural protection. The commission recommends that several procedural safeguards be established to ensure that the claimant's specific situation is considered on its own merit.

Ontario and B.C. at odds over mandatory retirement

by John Winter

The Ontario and British Columbia Courts of Appeal have recently diverged on the question of the constitutionality of the age 65 ceiling on age discrimination protection under their provinces' human rights legislation.

The Ontario case involved seven university professors and one university librarian who were mandatorily retired or scheduled for retirement solely because they had reached the age of 65. Five of these individuals had filed complaints with the Ontario Human Rights Commission, but the commission declined to deal with the complaints because of the age 65 limitation on age discrimination protection set out in the Code.

The court upheld the age 65 limitation. In its decision, the Court, emphasized the availability of the *Charter* in challenging such legislative limitations on equality rights. Indeed, in the university employment context the court concluded that the *Charter* can have no direct application to employment relationships and that it can only apply indirectly through its use in challenging the impugned provision of the Code.

The Appeal judges were careful to note that they were not concerned with the effect of the *Charter* and the Code on other mandatory retirement provisions that exist in the province. Focusing on the particular evidence pertinent to universities and their staff, the Court concluded that, while mandatory retirement of staff at age 65 has 'easily observable prejudicial effects' and offends the age equality provision in the *Charter*, it is a reasonable limit that is demonstrably justified and is therefore saved by section 1 of the *Charter*.

In reaching this conclusion, the Court said that the legislature was pursuing the 'pressing and substantial' objectives of effecting a compromise on the uncontrolled right to work and allowing for the renewal of the university work force by the employment of younger persons. The court character-

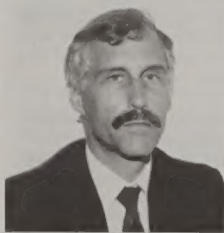
ized the government's effort to achieve these objectives through mandatory retirement as rational and also cited national and international trends in favour of mandatory retirement at age 65 in finding that mandatory retirement impairs the right to freedom from age discrimination as little as possible.

The Court also referred to the potential for universities to make special arrangements to retain staff after the age of 65 in concluding that there is proportionality between the objectives of the Code in allowing for mandatory retirement and the effects of mandatory retirement on university staff.

This decision is directly at odds with a similar case more recently decided by the British Columbia Court of Appeal. That Court used the *Charter* to strike down a similar ceiling on age discrimination protection contained in British Columbia's Human Rights Act. Even more curious is the fact that the B.C. case also involved university staff. Despite facts seemingly identical to those at issue in the Ontario case, the B.C. Court concluded that the infringement of the *Charter* age equality right could not be justified. The Court found that pension plans and the proper running of the university did not require 'denial of protection against employment related discrimination to persons over the age of 65.' The Court said that the impact of extending protection against employment-related discrimination to those over the age of 65 would be minimal and that mandatory retirement could not be supported by mere administrative convenience.

These B.C. and Ontario decisions indicate that, even in the narrow context of university staff, the issue of mandatory retirement remains unsettled, and direction is sorely needed from the Supreme Court of Canada. (An application for leave to appeal the Ontario case to the Supreme Court of Canada was scheduled for March 21, 1988.)

Executive Director appointed



Mr. Mike Gage has joined the Commission as its new Executive Director. Mr. Gage was formerly the Director of the Human Resources Branch of the Ministry of Culture and Communications. His responsibilities in that position included the provision of a full range of human resource services for the Ministry of Citizenship

as well as the Ministry of Culture and Communications.

Previously, Mr. Gage was Director of the Management Systems and Services Branch of the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture and was responsible for the provision of a broad range of managerial, systems and administrative support within the Ministry.

He has a Masters Degree in Economics from the University of Western Ontario. Prior to joining the Public Service, he taught economics, finance and business law for the Collegiate Institute Board of Ottawa.

Mr. Gage joined the Ontario Public Service in 1970 as Liaison Officer with the Education Data Processing Branch of the Ministry of Education. Since that time, he has held a number of positions of increasing responsibility in the areas of financial, technological and human resources management.

Par sa décision, M. McKeechne a exigé que M. Nuttall et les intimés de la compagnie versent à la plaignante la somme de 1 139,37 \$ pour pertes de revenus plus intérêts et 2 500 \$ pour dommages moraux. Il a été de plus ordonné à M. Nuttall de cesser tout harcèlement après ses employées et d'afficher la Déclaration de la direction de la Commission ontarienne des droits de la personne dans tous les établissements qu'il dirige en Ontario.

La protection des réfugiés concerne les droits de la personne

Les juges de la Cour d'appel ont fait remarquer que les effets de la charte et du code sur les autres clauses relatives à la retraite obligatoire dans la province ne feraient pas l'objet d'une étude. Alors que la retraite obligatoire, à 65 ans, a "des effets négatifs visibles" et contraindrait à la classe sur les droits à l'égalité de la charte, la Cour est venue à la conclusion que dans le cas particulier des universités et du personnel s'y rattachant, la requête est raisonnable et justifiée.

L'article 1 de la charte, est, par conséquent, protégée par que des directives de la Cour suprême du Canada sont inapplicables. Une demande d'autorisation d'appeler à la Cour suprême du Canada est prévue pour le 21 mars 1988 en ce qui concerne le cas de l'Iarnio.

Ces deux décisions prises par les Cours d'appel de l'Ontario et de la Colombie-Britannique démontrent que, même dans le contexte restreint du personnel universitaire, la question de la retraite obligatoire n'est pas encore réglée et que des directives de la Cour suprême du Canada sont inapplicables. Une demande d'autorisation d'appeler à la Cour suprême du Canada est prévue pour le 21 mars 1988 en ce qui concerne le cas de l'Iarnio.

M. Mike Gage vient de se joindre à la Commission à titre de directeur général. Il était auparavant directeur des ressources humaines au ministère de la Culture et des Communications. Les fonctions de ce poste comprennent la prestation de toute une gamme de services dans le domaine des ressources humaines pour le ministère des Affaires Communication. M. Gage est venu à la fonction pu- blique en 1970 comme agent de liaison à la Direction de l'Éducation. Depuis ce temps, dans les divers postes qu'il a occupés, ses responsabilités n'ont cessé d'augmenter en ce qui concerne la gestion financière et technologique ainsi que les res- sources humaines.

quant le dossier, la Commission admet que le processus de détermination du statut de réfugié doit être révisé afin de mieux financer les réclamations abusives. Ce qui nous préoccupe cependant, ce sont les quelques mesures proposées qui feraient rejeter un candidat sur une base très sommaire sans égard à sa réelle identité, à savoir si la personne est vraiment un ou une réfugié(e), et feraient retourner cette personne dans un autre pays sans avoir la garantie que ce pays le ou la protégera de la persécution".

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La lutte aux préjugés dans les écoles élémentaires



Imaginez une classe où les enfants seraient classés par groupes selon la couleur de leurs yeux ou de leurs cheveux. On leur dirait que ceux qui ont les yeux bleus ne sont pas autorisés à adresser la parole aux enfants des autres groupes, à partager leurs jeux ou les aider s'ils n'appartiennent pas au même groupe qu'eux.

Dans une autre classe, on demande à un enfant de décrire ses sentiments pour son meilleur ami... pourquoi ils sont amis, quelle est sa personnalité, ses principales qualités et ainsi de suite. Puis, on demande à l'enfant de regarder son ami à travers un grand verre grossissant recouvert d'un papier cellophane de couleur et de décrire les changements qu'il observe chez son ami. Il est évident que la première remarque sera que l'ami a changé de couleur. Mais, est-ce que cela modifiera les sentiments de cet enfant pour son ami ou changera son ami de quelque façon que ce soit?

Ces deux exercices font partie d'une série qui s'adresse aux écoliers du niveau élémentaire et qui a pour but de lutter contre les préjugés. Ce manuel est distribué par la Anti-Discrimination League.

Le livre intitulé *Teacher, they called me a ...!* (Monsieur, ils m'appellent ...) suggère plus de 60 activités à faire en classe et une approche réaliste pour combattre les préjugés et la discrimination chez les enfants.

Cet ouvrage de M^{me} Deborah A. Byrnes du département de l'enseignement primaire de l'Université de l'Utah fut à l'origine rédigé pour le "Utah State Office of Education" et publié par ADL. M^{me} Byrnes a interviewé des enseignants et des étudiants afin de déterminer quels seraient les problèmes abordés.

Dans son introduction, le livre note que même si les adultes de notre société américaine ont tendance à croire que les enfants n'ont pas de préjugés, les enfants apprennent très tôt, même avant d'aller à l'école, à faire des différences et de la discrimination.

Le manuel insiste sur l'importance du rôle que les enseignants peuvent jouer dans la formation et l'augmentation des attitudes préjudiciables en se servant des nombreux stéréotypes que l'enfant connaît déjà.

Les objectifs de ce livre visent à aider les enfants à :

- comprendre ce qu'est un préjugé, la discrimination et le stéréotype;

suite à la page 2

La Commission voudrait que l'Entente du lac Meech soit modifiée

Le commissaire en chef, Ray Anand, a aujourd'hui fait part de ses inquiétudes concernant le processus d'entente

survenu au lac Meech et de ses répercussions sur les droits contenus dans la charte. Monsieur Anand par-

lait au nom de la Commission ontarienne des droits de la personne devant le Comité spécial de la réforme

constitutionnelle.

Il a ajouté que "l'élaboration d'amendements à la constitution sans en avoir discuté les détails avec des Canadiens est une répudiation d'un principe in-

contesté jusqu'à maintenant, celui de l'importance d'une consultation honnête avant de faire toute modifica-

tion à la loi suprême du Canada".

Monsieur Anand a souligné que, selon la charte les inquiétudes de la Commission en ce qui concerne les torts causés aux droits de la personne

s'appliquent à tous les groupes protégés contre la discrimination par le code.

Il poursuit en disant que "La Commission ontarienne des droits de la per-

sonne appuie entièrement la promotion du bilinguisme et comprend le désir des autres Canadiens de supporter les

Québécois qui veulent protéger leurs droits les plus légitimes à l'intérieur de la constitution". Néanmoins, la

Commission croit sincèrement que toute négociation pour amender la constitution devrait être basée sur une charte des droits et libertés qui soit

solide et monsieur Anand a reconnu l'importance de faire toute consultation

honnête avant de faire toute modification à la loi suprême du Canada".

Monsieur Anand a souligné que, selon la charte les inquiétudes de la Commission en ce qui concerne les torts causés aux droits de la personne

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